

## How to start a neighborhood plan in your area

First, check the Flathead County Planning and Zoning Website ([flathead.mt.gov/planning\\_zoning](http://flathead.mt.gov/planning_zoning)) or call the office to see if there is a neighborhood plan in place where you live. If not, contact some of your neighbors to see if there is an interest for planning your neighborhood's future.

If there is interest please call the Planning and Zoning Office. Staff will discuss the initial organizational steps needed for the crafting of a neighborhood plan.



### *Mission Statement:*

"The Flathead County Planning & Zoning Office is committed to providing the highest level of planning services. We will accomplish this through employees who anticipate public needs, and promote a work environment that encourages creativity, communication and cooperation. The Office will also encourage professional development and training for all staff members."

*Flathead County  
Planning & Zoning*

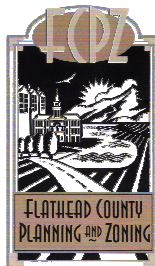
## *Neighborhood Plans*

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*For more information, contact:*



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Information on  
Neighborhood Plans in  
Flathead County.

# Neighborhood Plans

## What is a neighborhood plan?

Neighborhood plans are non-regulatory and represent a preferred vision of the community. They guide growth and development into the future in a way the residents want to see their area grow and develop. A neighborhood plan includes detailed information and maps detailing land uses, opportunities and issues, and identifies goals and policies important to the residents.

### Basis of authority

Neighborhood plans are authorized under the growth policy statutes in Montana State Law (76-1-601, MCA). Neighborhood plans must be consistent with the Flathead County Growth Policy. Chapter 10 of the growth policy is all about neighborhood planning.



## Why not have a neighborhood plan?

Without a neighborhood plan there is no order as to how your neighborhood grows and develops. Unless zoned, anything can happen next door to you or down the street and there is little you can do about it. A neighborhood plan is a solid choice if you value your surroundings, where you live and want to see that they are maintained. With a neighborhood plan residents set the vision for growth and development in a way acceptable to most everyone.

### Benefits of having a neighborhood plan:

- Neighborhood plans are prepared by the residents, with assistance from planning staff, for the betterment of the community;
- Most importantly neighborhood plans represents a community vision of what you want your community to be and look like in the future and are used as a guide and means realize that specific vision;
- A neighborhood plan gives greater predictability to residents who want to develop their property;
- A neighborhood plan balances property rights for you, your neighbors and the community as a whole;
- A neighborhood plan results in more efficient use of public services (like water and sewer, sheriff and fire responses, schools, streets and other public infrastructure) resulting in more effective use of your tax dollars;



- A neighborhood plan provides a greater voice into land use decision making by elected and appointed officials.

## Who should be involved?

As many people who live in your neighborhood as possible. The greater the public involvement and viewpoints in the creation of your plan, the greater the likelihood the plan will represent the entire community.

## What would be my commitment?

- Perhaps Time - The planning process may take over a year depending upon the availability of staff, the organization of the neighborhood, and the complexity of the plan itself.
- Perhaps Resources - People in your community should be willing to donate their time to work on the plan, and some expenses to pay for surveys and mailings, etc.
- Mostly Patience - It is not possible in land use planning to reach a 100 % consensus. Do not get frustrated when you reach road blocks during the planning process. An open dialog between opposing points of view often leads to solutions. It takes hard work to find a plan the majority of residents can agree too.